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ABSTRACT

The subjects of "Current Biography Yearbook 1970" and "Current Biography Yearbook 1991" were analyzed to see if the gender, race/ethnic group, geographic setting, and occupation of the subjects had changed over time. ("Current Biography" is a collective biographical source that contains short profiles of currently prominent people.) A particular concern of the study was to see if the increase in the minority population was reflected in greater minority representation in "Current Biography Yearbook 1991." Whether more women were included in 1991 was also of interest. The results of the analysis showed that in 1991, 77% of the subjects were males, 84% were white, and 75% were from the United States. A slight increase (3%) in number were shown by two groups, women and blacks. The occupations most frequently represented were writing, government and politics, music, and acting. The subjects included in "Current Biography Yearbook 1970" had similar characteristics to those in the earlier yearbook. The characteristics of people in this biography were compared with recent studies on adult, young adult, and children's biographies. Findings about the subjects were similar in all categories. (Contains 22 references.) (KRN)

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ENT BIOGRAPHY YEARBOOK
IN
ND 1991:
GE SHOW A DIFFERENCE?

A Master's Research Paper submitted to the
Kent State Univiversity School of Libray and Information Science
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree Master of Library Science

by

Dolores A. Martinez

August, 1993

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I. INTRODUCTION

Since about the mid-1980s, service to culturally diverse groups has received renewed interest from libraries, primarily due to dramatic demographic changes that have increased the numbers of minority and ethnic groups in the United States. For libraries this means changes in their services populations.[1] In the past, libraries have attempted to meet the needs of their communities through collections, services, and programs, and recently have taken new steps to respond to their increasingly multicultural communities.[2] The American Library Association focuses on this concern in its 1990 document, Addressing Ethnic and Cultural Diversity: Report of Activities of the American Library Association 1986-1989. The Minority Concern Policy of this report states "the role played by libraries to enable minorities to participate fully in a democratic society is crucial. Libraries must utilize multivariate resources and strategies to empower minority people."[3]

The importance of incorporating multicultural literature into library collections is not only necessary in order to provide relavant materials to diverse groups within a given community, but is an asset to people of all communities. As writers have suggested, having some knowledge of our neighbors, both near and far, is ever more important in view of contemporary world

realities, characterized by a very rapid growth in minorities, which will result in over a third of the population of the United States being nonwhite by the year 2000,[4] growth of global markets, media that reaches all corners of the world, and worldwide environmental concerns.[5] These trends pose challenges for libraries in being able to meet the needs of their realigned communities, and in providing greater awareness and understanding of multiculturalism.

One area that has received some investigation recently is biography. Biography is recognized as an important and popular form of literature which appeals to readers through the insights given into the lives of other people. The purpose of these studies was to do an analysis of the subjects of biographies according to gender, race/ethnic group, geographical setting, occupation and, in some cases, historical period. Three of these studies were conducted to see if there were changes over time in the subjects, and if these changes relected the greater cultural diversity of the 1980s. Two of the studies analyzed subjects--one for a single year, and the other for a cluster of consecutive years.

Similar results were found by all of the studies, in that the majority of the subjects were white males from the United States, and of a rather narrow range of occupations. The general conclusion drawn from these studies was that the underrepresentation of women, minorities, and foreigners was a disservice to the public in general, but especially to minorities. Readers would benefit from a wider selection of biographical

subjects, whose lives and experiences are different from their own, and minorities need the encouragement of examples from role models within their own groups.[6] It is with regards to minorities in this respect that an objective of the ALA in its Minority Concerns Policy is to promote "the publication, production, and purchase of print and non-print materials that present positive role models of cultural minorities."[7]

Purpose of the Study

This study of Current Biography analyzed the subjects of two of its annual volumes, for the years 1970 and 1991. The analysis was conducted using the same variables as in the above mentioned studies, except for historical period. The purpose of this study was to see if a change had occurred over time, and if this change showed that the biographical subjects in Current Biography 1991 were represented by an increased number of women, minorities, and people of non-Western countries as chacacteristic of a multicultural society, or were the bigraphees similar to those of the other studies.

Current Biography was chosen for analysis because it contains subjects which are today's most prominent newsmakers. It is also one of the most, if not the most, popular collective biographical sources found in most public and academic libraries. Its aim, as stated in the preface to the volumes, "is to provide the reference librarian, student, or any researcher with objective, accurate, and well documented biographical articles about living leaders in all

fields of human accomplishment the world over.[8]

Definition of Terms

The following definition of multiculturalism is taken from the Harper Collins Dictionary of Sociology, 1991.

> Multiculturalism--the acknowledgement and promotion of cultural pluralism as a feature of many societies. In opposition to the tendency of modern societies to cultural unification and universalization, multiculturalism celebrates and seeks to protect cultural variety, for example, minority languages. At the same time it focuses on the often unequal relationship of minority to mainstream cultures. After decades of persecution, the prospects of indigenous or immigrant cultures are now helped somewhat by the support they receive from international public opinion, and the international community, for example, the United Nations.[9]

Limitations of the Study

The data for this study is limited to one collective biographical source, Current Biography and, for two years only, 1970 and 1991.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to locate any research concerning biographies, the following indexes were consulted: Library Literature, Library and Information Science Abstracts (LISA), Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC), Masters Absracts International, and Comprehensive Dissertation Index from the years 1980 to the present. Very little published literature had been done on this topic as confirmed in the 1990 study by William C. Robinson, "Adult Biographies Reviewed by Library Journal in the 1960s and 1980s."[10]

In this study he analyzed the subjects of adult biographies. He did this through reviews to them found in Library Journal for some years in the 1960s and 1980s. His purpose was to compare these time periods to see if a change in subjects had occurred in the 1980s that showed forth their cultural diversity. He hypothesized that the biographies in the 1980s would feature more females, minorities, and people of other countries. But what he found was that the subjects of biographies in the 1980s were nearly identical to those of the 1960s, with about 76 percent of the subjects for both decades about males, 94 percent about white people, and 55 percent from the United States.[11]

He discusses the importance of published reviews to librarians in selecting biographies for their collections, but found that "when reviewed biographies are largely limited to white male

politicians and authors living in the United States, the drama is limited and atypical of the world we live in."[12] In his concluding remarks, he regrets the fact that due to this, stereotyping is allowed to continue concerning some groups. Because of this lack, he sees the need for librarians to encourage publishers to publish more nontraditional types of biographies.[13]

Two studies by Virginia Witucke analyzed the subjects of juvenile biographies. In "Trends in Juvenile Biography" (1981), she looked at subjects for the year 1978. By using reviewing sources, primarily School Library Journal, she obtained information on the subjects' occupations, nationalities, and historical period. She found most of the biographies to be about contemporary persons, many in some form of entertainment or sports, and nearly all were Americans, about 92%. Also there were few historical figures. Due to this narrow range of subjects and occupations, she likewise concluded that children also were not being well served by biography.[14]

She conducted a second study five years later to note if any changes had occurred since then. In this study, she included two more variables, that of gender and race. She did find a change for the better in the group of subjects examined for 1983. There was more of a balance between living and dead subjects, greater variance among ages, occupations, and nationalities. There was also a rise in the number of women, but a slight decrease in the number of minorities. She also did a content analysis for both of these studies on the biographies that she was able to obtain, in

order to determine their scholarship. Witucke maintains that it is the librarian's responsibility to select quality books reflective of the pluralistic society in which we live, and hopes that publishers will get the message.[15]

Two recent Masters Research Papers also look at the subjects of biographies. The study by Timothy R. Diamond "Adult Biographies Reviews in Booklist: Have the Subjects Changed in Twenty Years?" replicates the research by Robinson, except he used Booklist as his reviewing source. He wanted to see if the biographies reviewed by Booklist in the 1980s presented more women, minorities, etc., or would his findings parallel those of Robinson.[16]

Diamond discovered that the biographies reviewed by Booklist in the 1960s and 1980s were nearly identical in choice of subjects, for both time periods, as were those of Robinson's study.[17] Also, Diamond's findings were similar to those of Robinson. Diamond discusses the importance of Booklist as a reviewing source for libraries. A study showed that 90.2% of small and medium-sized public libraries and community colleges use this source, perhaps more than any other. It reviews more books annually than any other reviewing source, and includes only those that are recommended for libraries.[18]

Seeing that his study produced similar results as Robinson's, he considers the timeliness of the ALA's new Minority Concern Policy, which calls for librarians to promote the publication and purchase of minority biography. He concludes that if traditional reviewing sources fail to provide a more diverse selection of

biographies that include an adequate representation of women and minorities, then librarians may have to look elsewhere.[19]

Below is discussed some research on multiculturalism, but here an interjection is be made about a new reviewing source, Multicultural Review. It is highly recommended by Bill Katz in Library Journal, and is devoted to reviewing multicultural literature, including biography.[20]

Annette J. Haney's research paper, "From President to Rock Stars: An Analysis of the Subjects of Young Adult Biographies" looks at the subjects of young adult biographies reviewed by School Library Journal and Voice of Youth Advocates (VOYA) from 1987 through 1991.[21] Her analysis of subjects included that of gender, race/ethnic group, geographical setting, occupation, and historical period. She made a general comparison of her results to those of the above studies, and also found her results to be similar to theirs in choice of subjects. She sees it as unfortunate that these social, cultural, and racial biases exist in biographies, and that young adults, as adults and children, do not have a wider selection of biographies to choose from.[22]

These studies all discuss biographies in the context of their existence within a diverse population, and see the need for a greater variety of people to be recognized by biographers in their works. Many writers have pointed out that cultural diversity will increasingly characterize our society, therefore the issue of multiculturalism is coming more into the forefront of discussions. Library Literature cites some of these studies.

To understand what multiculturalism is, and respond fairly to its reality around us, is expressed in many of these. As yet, it has different levels of meaning to people, but it is said that "a truly multicultural society recognizes that people have different beliefs, customs, and experiences. It recognizes the importance of each of these groups."[23] Going beyond merely being tolerant of other races and cultures, understanding multiculturalism could help solve problems arising from differences.[24]

Multiculturalism is the focus of several feature articles in Wilson Library Bulletin for February 1992. They focus on what the ALA and libraries are doing to provide services to complex cultural communities. This is in keeping with the ALA's commitment to increase efforts by the profession to "effectively address the reality of the nation's cultural diversity."[25]

To mention a couple of these, in "Responding to Cultural Diversity: A Library in Transition," James Fish discusses some of the problems facing libraries as they try to respond to these changes in the composition of their communities. He argues that the demographic and cultural change occurring in our country is unparalleled since the early 1900s. Not only are there language differences, but racial and cultural differences are greater now, causing great demands on libraries in the face of shrinking resources.[26]

In her article "Mainstreaming Library Services to Multicultural Populations: The Evolving Tapestry" Shelly Quezada highlights some of the nationwide responses library associations

and government agencies have made towards programs and services to meet the needs of these populations. But she cautions librarians to make sure that they are providing quality materials, programs, and services to minorities and not just a token tribute to an occassional holiday or hero.[27] She also questions whether librarians will have the necessary programs and services in place, as they find themselves on the "threshold of a dramatic new population era."[28]

This emphasis on multiculturalism has particular importance to children's library services and collections. Multiculturalism does not mean ignoring racism and discrimination, rather it seeks to solve problems arising from living with cultural differences. For this reason, many children's librarians have for years seen the need to provide socially equitable literature, free of stereotyping anyone by sex, race, nationality, etc.

Much of this can be due to the efforts of the Council on Interracial Books for Children.[29] Since the mid-1960s it has zealously fought racism and discrimination in children's works and promoted those that were not only bias-free, but, in addition, presented positive images of minorities.[30] In speaking about multicultural books for children, Ginny Moore Kruse explains that all children need culturally accurate books, not only minority children, because through these they will have the grounds for beginning to understand.[31] Corinne Camarata also maintains that multicultural books are for all children when she says; "Our library collections can and should reflect this cultural diversity

even if our own communities do not."[32]

Because various cultures make up what is American culture--a multiethnic and pluralistic society bonded together by commonly held values and beliefs--it is essential to acknowledge the importance of these different groups. In its "Addressing Diversity" report the ALA shows its support in actively promoting services to minorities and at the same time working to combat prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination against groups or individuals.[33]

III. METHODOLOGY

Data was collected for all subjects in the 1970 and 1991 annual volumes of Current Biography. (Obituaries were not included). The 1970 volume had a total of 185 biographies, and the 1991 volume had a total of 161. By paging through each volume, information was gathered about each subject on the following:

1. Gender of subject
2. Race/Ethnic group of subject
3. Geographic setting of subject
4. Occupation of subject

The statistics obtained for these were recorded on tables. Tables pertaining to occupations include one summarizing the total array of occupations for 1970 and 1991. Other tables further divided occupations according to gender and race/ethnic group. General comparisons from these findings were made to those of the other studies on adult, young adult, and children's biographies, in order to obtain a general idea of whether a collective biography would follow the same pattern as the other studies, which results were found to be similar to each other in these categories.

IV. FINDINGS

Characteristics of the Sample

Current Biography is a collective biographical source that contains short profiles of currently prominent people. The number included in each annual volume may vary. In 1970 there were 185 subjects, and 161 subjects in 1991. Current Biography also updates some of the subject profiles. This is the case for two subjects in 1991, who had articles that appeared in the 1970 Current Biography.

Gender of Biographical Subjects

In the 1970 volume of Current Biography, 82.70% of the subjects were males, and in 1991, the figure was 77.00%. These findings were similar to the other biographical studies. Robinson found that in the 1960s, 78% of the subjects were males, and in the 1980s, 74%.[34] Diamond found that 80% of the subjects were males in the 1960s and, in the 1980s, males were the subjects of 73% of the biographies.[35] In Witucke's 1978 study, 75% of the subjects were males and 69% were males in 1983.[36] Haney found in her study, that 70.6% of the subjects were males, but this trend was reversed when looking at teenage young adult subjects, in which males were 33% of the sample.[37]

Race/Ethnic Group of Biographical Subjects

Current Biography in 1970 showed that 87.02% of its subjects were white people. Minorities and others for this year included Blacks (5.95%), Hispanics (5.41%), Asians (1.08%), and Asian Indians (.54%). In 1991, white people were the subjects of 83.85% of the biographies. Minorities and others in 1991 included Blacks (9.93%), Hispanics (4.35%), and Asians (1.87%). Table 1 provides a summary of these findings.

Table 1.--Race/Ethnic Group of Biographical Subjects, 1970 and 1991

Year	Race/Ethnic Group	Number	Percentage
1970	White	161	87.02
	Black	11	5.95
	Hispanic	10	5.41
	Asian	2	1.08
	Indian	1	0.54
Total		185	100.00
1991	White	135	83.85
	Black	16	9.93
	Hispanic	7	4.35
	Asian	3	1.87
Total		161	100.00

The findings again corresponded for the most part to those of the previous studies, in that white people constitute the majority of the biographies,[38] though Blacks were represented more in the studies by Haney and Witucke. Haney found that 21.2% of the

subjects were Black,[39] and Witucke found that Blacks were 23% of the sample in 1978, and 18% in 1983.[40]

Hispanics were better represented in Current Biography than in the other studies, with 5.41% in 1970, and 4.35% in 1991. Haney found 2.7% Hispanics as subjects.[41] Diamond found that Hispanics were .46% of the 1960s sample, and 1.00% in the 1980s.[42] Witucke found one Hispanic subject for each of the years that she analyzed.[43]

There were three subjects representing other races in Current Biography for each of the years examined. In this respect, these findings (of low percentages for this category) resemble those of the earlier studies.[44]

Geographical Setting of Biographical Subjects

The majority of the subjects for both of these years analyzed in Current Biography was from the United States. The figure for 1970 was 72.97% and, for 1991, 74.53%. In the other studies, the majority of the subjects was also from the United States.[45] The highest number was found by Witucke in her 1978 study, with Americans representing 92% of the subjects. But this decreased to 60% in her 1983 study.[46] Both Robinson and Diamond found an increase in the number of subjects from the United States in the 1980s. For Robinson, the figure was 58% in the 1980s,[47] and for Diamond, it was 67.55%.[48] In Haney's study, 68.4% of the subjects were from the United States.[49]

In Current Biography for 1970, the next most represented

countries were Western Europe (11.35%), the United Kingdom (6.49%), and Latin America (2.70%). In 1991, these were the United Kingdom (7.45%), Western Europe (5.60%), and Eastern Europe (2.50%). The most represented geographic places in Current Biography for 1991 were the same and, in that order, for the studies by Robinson, Diamond, and Haney. Also, the figures were comparative to theirs. The low percentages for the remaining regions of the world represented in Current Biography also reflect the same patterns found in the other studies.[50] A summary of findings for geographic setting is given in Table 2.

Table 2.--Geographic Setting of Biographical Subjects, 1970 and 1991

Year	Place	Number	Percentage
1970	United States	135	72.97
	Western Europe	21	11.35
	United Kingdom	12	6.49
	Latin America	5	2.70
	Africa	3	1.63
	Eastern Europe	2	1.08
	Middle East	2	1.08
	West Indies	2	1.08
	Australia	1	0.54
Total		185	100.00
1991	United States	120	74.53
	United Kingdom	12	7.45
	Western Europe	9	5.60
	Eastern Europe	4	2.50
	Asia	3	1.86
	Canada	3	1.86
	Latin America	3	1.86
	Africa	2	1.24
	Australia	2	1.24
	Middle East	2	1.24
	West Indies	1	o.62
Total		161	100.00

Occupation of Biographical Subjects

For both years examined in Current Biography, government and politics, writing, music, and acting were the most represented occupations, though order varied somewhat as follows. In 1970, government and politics was the leading occupation with 17.84%. The next ones were writing (11.35%), acting (8.11%), and music (8.11%). In 1991, the leading occupation was writing (17.39%), followed by government and politics (16.77%), music (16.15%), and acting (10.56%). In 1991, the percentage of subjects in music almost doubled, and is almost equal to the percentage of those in government and politics. Tables 3 and 4 provide a summary of occupations. Robinson, Diamond, and Haney also found that politics and writing received the most attention as occupations.[51] Witucke found this true for politics.[52] Also, the four leading occupations in Current Biography were the same as those found by Diamond for both time periods.[53]

Table 3.--Occupation of Biographical Subjects, 1970

Occupation	Number	Percentage
Government & Politics	33	17.84
Writing	21	11.35
Acting	15	8.11
Music	15	8.11
Science	13	7.03
Sports	12	6.49
Business	11	5.95
Education	9	4.86
Religion	9	4.86
Film/Stage Director/Producer	8	4.32
Art	6	3.24
Dance	6	3.24
Fashion Design	5	2.71
Medicine	4	2.16
Organizations	4	2.16
Law	3	1.62
Other	11	5.95
Total	185	100.00

Table 4.--Occupation of Biographical Subjects, 1991

Occupation	Number	Percentage
Writing	28	17.39
Government & Politics	27	16.77
Music	26	16.15
Acting	17	10.56
Filmaking, Film/Stage Director/Producer	11	6.84
Business	10	6.22
Sports	8	4.97
Education	5	3.11
Art	3	1.86
Religion	3	1.86
Cartooning	2	1.24
Dance	2	1.24
Editing	2	1.24
Fashion Design	2	1.24
Law	2	1.24
Photographer	2	1.24
Other	11	6.84
Total	161	100.00

Occupation Divided by Gender of Biographical Subjects

Due to the fact that male subjects comprise about 80% of the biographies in Current Biography for both of these years examined, the distribution of their occupations is similar to the total review of occupations. (This also can be also noted in other studies.)[54] The most representative occupations of women in 1970 were acting (21.87%), government and politics (18.75%), music (9.37%), and dance (9.37%). In 1991, music lead with 21.62%, followed by writing (18.92%), acting (16.22%), and government and politics (10.81%).

In 1970, 6.25% of female subjects were in the category of wife, but, in 1991, there were no subjects within this category. A decrease in this category can also be noted in the other studies.[55] Tables 5 and 6 provide summaries of these findings.

Table 5.--Occupation Divided by Gender of Biographical Subjects, 1970

Gender	Occupation	Number	Percentage
Male	Govenment & Politics	27	17.65
	Writing	19	12.42
	Science	13	8.50
	Music	12	7.84
	Sports	12	7.84
	Business	11	7.19
	Acting	8	5.23
	Education	8	5.23
	Religion	8	5.23
	Film/Stage Dir./Producer	7	4.58
	Art	6	3.93
	Medicine	4	2.62
	Organizations	4	2.62
	Dance	3	1.96
	Fashion Design	3	1.96
	Law	3	1.96
	Other	5	3.27
Total		153	100.00
Female	Acting	7	21.87
	Government & Politics	6	18.75
	Music	3	9.37
	Dance	3	9.37
	Fashion Design	2	6.25
	Wife	2	6.25
	Writing	2	6.25
	Education	1	3.13
	Film Director	1	3.13
	Religion	1	3.13
	Other	4	12.50
Total		32	100.00

Table 6.--Occupation Divided by Gender of Biographical Subjects, 1991

Gender	Occupation	Number	Percentage
Male	Govenment & Politics	23	18.55
	Writing	21	16.94
	Music	18	14.52
	Acting	11	8.87
	Filmaking, Film/Stage Director/Producer	11	8.87
	Business	10	8.10
	Sports	7	5.65
	Art	3	2.41
	Religion	3	2.41
	Cartooning	2	1.61
	Education	2	1.61
	Law	2	1.61
	Dance	1	0.80
	Fashion Design	1	0.80
	Photographer	1	0.80
	Other	8	6.45
Total		124	100.00
Female	Music	8	21.62
	Writing	7	18.62
	Acting	6	16.22
	Government & Politics	4	10.81
	Education	3	8.11
	Editor	2	5.41
	Dance	1	2.70
	Fashion Design	1	2.70
	Photographer	1	2.70
	Sports	1	2.70
	Other	3	8.11
Total		37	100.00

Occupation of Subjects of Other Races/Ethnic Groups

Blacks were represented by a variety of occupations in 1970. The leading ones were government and politics (27.28%), acting (18.18%), and writing (18.18%). In 1991, these were music

(31.25%), sports (25.00%), and writing (25.00%). Sports or some form of entertainment often represented leading occupations for Blacks. This was found in the other studies also. Haney found that 21.43% of Black male subjects were in sports,[56] Diamond found that, in the 1980s, 27.42% of the Black subjects were in sports,[57] and Witucke found that 33.33% of Black subjects were involved in sports in 1983.[58] Robinson found, however, that the leading occupation of Black subjects was politics.[59]

Table 7.--Occupation of Black Subjects, 1970 and 1991

Year	Occupation	Number	Percentage
1970	Government & Politics	3	27.28
	Acting	2	18.18
	Writing	2	18.18
	Music	1	9.09
	Organizations	1	9.09
	Religion	1	9.09
	Sports	1	9.09
Total		11	100.00
1991	Music	5	31.25
	Sports	4	25.00
	Writing	4	25.00
	Acting	1	6.25
	Government & Politics	1	6.25
	Religion	1	6.25
Total		16	100.00

For Hispanic subjects, the leading occupation by far for both of these years in Current Biography was government and politics. In 1970, it represented 50.00% of the sample and, in 1991, 57.14%. This trend can also be seen in some of the other studies. Robinson found that in the 1960s, 56% of Hispanic subjects were in

politics and, in the 1980s, this increased to 71%.[60] In Diamond's study, 50.00% of the Hispanic subjects were in politics in the 1960s, but this decreased to 9% in the 1980s.[61] Haney found that 66.66% of the Hispanic subjects were in politics.[62]

Table 8.-- Occupation of Hispanic Subjects, 1970 and 1991

Year	Occupation	Number	Percentage
1970	Government & Politics	5	50.00
	Writing	2	20.00
	Fashion Design	1	10.00
	Law	1	10.00
	Religion	1	10.00
Total		10	100.00
1991	Government & Politics	4	57.14
	Music	2	28.57
	Sports	1	14.29
Total		7	100.00

There were three subjects of other races for these years in Current Biography. In 1970, a subject from India and one from Indonesia were in government and politics (66.66%), and one from Pakistan was in science (33.33%). In 1991, there were three subjects from Japan in the occupations of filmaking (33.33%), government and politics (33.33%), and music (33.33%). In the other studies a leading occupation of non-white, non-African-American subjects was also politics.[63]

Table 9.--Occupation of Other Races, 1970 and 1991

Year	Occupation	Number	Percentage
1970	Government & Politics	2	66.66
	Science	1	33.33
Total		3	100.00
1991	Filmaking	1	33.33
	Government & Politics	1	33.33
	Music	1	33.33
Total		3	100.00

V. DISCUSSION

This study of Current Biography sampled just two of its annual volumes, 1970 and 1991. It's assumed that the statistics obtained from the analysis could be generally comparable to its other volumes, within about one or two years of the years examined. Also, the comparisons made to the results of the other biographical studies were very general, due to differnces in time periods and sample sizes. In addition, a contemporary, collective biographical source, such as Current Biography, differs somewhat in character from individual biographies. The biographical profiles are often like those found in magazines. They are usually short personality sketches that have to do with something currently involving the subjects for which they are noted, along with a bit of their history. Yet, the findings overall were similar to the other studies on biography.

Like these studies, the vast majority of the subjects were white and male, from the United States, and with a large portion in politics and writing. Women and minorities were underrepresented, and the percentage of people not from Europe or the United Kingdom was very low. In Current Biography Yearbook 1991, the two groups that showed an increase in number were women and Blacks (less than 3%). Both increased by five people in 1991, and women were represented by more nontraditional types of work, such as, editor

(5.41%), photographer (2.70%), and broadcast journalist (2.70%). Also, Current Biography does present a wide range of occupations, though the most representative were similar to the other studies in type and number.

The researchers of these studies regard this lack of a greater variation of subjects and occupations as culturally biased, which, as some hold, is likely to perpetuate stereotypes of racism and sexism.[64] School librarian, Renee Steinberg, also agrees that "literature tends both to reflect the views and prejudices of society and to be an influence for change."[65] Besides the negative consequences caused by stereotyping, there is the added disservice that this presents to women and munorities, who are limited in role models provided to them through biography.

Taking a more positive view, if biography included many more people of other cultures, and of a wider range of occupations, then, as Robinson speculates, perhaps the insight into other peoples' lives who are different, may help to remove stereotypes regarding them, and replace them with the basic similarities underlying our existence.[66] Other writers also see the necessity to portray minorities in positive and culturally accurate images in order to help eliminate racism and promote understanding and justice.[67]

The recognition and respect of other cultures in a society is an aspect of what multiculturalism is about. In the past few years, the topic has become more discussed in its relation to libraries in the United States. Since about 1990, Library

Literature seems to cite more studies than previously using the term "multiculturalism"[68] in their titles.

This new stress on multiculturalism and libraries' response is the direct result of the tremendous demographic changes that have occurred, and are predicted to increase greatly in the coming years. Shelly Quezada describes the situation:

> In many communities throughout the United States the term 'ethnic and racial minorities' is being replaced by the term 'emerging majority.' For example, in California by the year 2000 more than 52 percent of the population will be Hispanic, native American, African-American, or Asian-American. In the 1980s, California's Hispanic population grew by 118 percent. These dramatic population shifts are paralleled in other regions of the country.[69]

The ALA acknowledges multiculturalism as part of its mission through its "Addressing Diversity" Report, 1990. It calls upon the profession to heighten its efforts to meet these new challenges in communities.[70] Roberto G. Trujillo and Yolanda J. Cuesta, in speaking about this phenomenal minority population growth, comment in the ALA Yearbook 1989, "As ethnic people become major players in government at city, county, state and national levels, libraries will find the need to respond to demographically different communities has once again become imperative."[71]

With regards to their policy objective of promoting the publication, production, and purchase of materials that will provide role models for minorities, the researchers of these studies do agree that librarians must take an active role in soliciting publishers to publish more nontraditional types of biographies, and/or seeking to locate these to purchase for their collections.[72] There are a number of sources and services from

which multicultural materials can be obtained.[73]

Hopefully, these efforts at promoting multiculturalism by the library profession will result in the production of more ethnic biographies, and will be made available to the public through library collections. Also, as the minority population continues to increase, and a greater number of minority people take part in and become prominent in a variety of fields, more of them will become the subjects of biographies. If this should prove to be the case, then perhaps more minority people will also be included in Current Biography, since the findings of this study paralleled those of the other studies.

VI. NOTES

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3. Sybil E. Moses. comp. and ed., Addressing Ethnic and Cultural Diversity: A Report of the American Library Association, 1986-1989 (Chicago: American Library Association, 1990), 16.

4. Michael Chimes and Peter Schmidt, "What I Read Over My Summer Vacation: Readings on Cultural Diversity," The Clearing House 64 (September/October 1990): 44.

5. Margaret King Van Duyne and Debra Jacobs, "Embracing Diversity: One With One's Bold New Partnerships," Wilson Library Bulletin 66 (February 1992): 42.

6. William C. Robinson, "Adult Biographies Reviewed by Library Journal in the 1960s and 1980s," RQ 29 (Summer 1990): 549-50.

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10. Robinson, 546.

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31. Ginny Moore Kruse, "No Single Season: Multicultural Literature For All Children," Wilson Library Bulletin 66 (February 1992): 122.

32. Corinne Camarata, "Making Connections: Introducing Multicultural Books," School Library Journal 32 (September 1991): 190.

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35. Diamond, 11.

36. Witucke, "Five Years Later," 46.

37. Haney, 11.

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39. Ibid., 12.

40. Witucke, "Five Years Later," 46.

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42. Diamond, 14.

43. Witucke, "Five Years Later," 46.

44. Haney, 12.

45. Ibid.

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47. Robinson, 548.

48. Diamond, 15.

49. Haney, 12.

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52. Witucke, "Five Years Later," 46.

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54. Ibid., 21.

55. Ibid., 20.

56. Haney, 17.

57. Diamond, 22.

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62. Haney, 18.

63. Ibid.

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